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Obituary for Dr. Joseph C. Hinsey

Special to the New York Times: -- Dr. Joseph C. Hinsey, the former Director of New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center, passed away on March 25, 1981 after a brief illness. He was 79 years old. Born in Ottumwa, Iowa, on April 29, 1901, he received a B.S. degree with highest distinction and an M.S. degree in Zoology from Northwestern University. After a year serving as Instructor in Biology at Western Reserve University in Cleveland, he became a graduate student and then a faculty member at the Washington University Medical School in St. Louis, where he received a Ph.D. in the Neurological Sciences in 1927.

In 1930, he was appointed Professor of Anatomy in the Stanford University Medical School. In 1936, he was appointed Professor and Head of the Department of Physiology in the Cornell University Medical College in New York City, and three years later he was made Professor and Head of the Department of Anatomy. In 1941 he also became Dean of the Medical College and served in the dual capacity until 1953, when he was appointed Director of the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center. In that position, he continued as Professor of Neuroanatomy along with his duties as chief administrative officer of the Medical Center. In 1958, he was the first recipient of the Abraham Flexner Award by the Association of American Medical Colleges for his outstanding contributions to medical education.

During his administrative leadership at the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center, he served on many public commissions and surveys dealing with medical education and health care, and was called upon by many institutions over the country

for help and advice. He was a trustee of Cornell University, the Memorial-Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, the Memorial Hospital, the Sloan Kettering Institute, the National Fund for Medical Education, the Lahey Clinic Foundation, the Institute for Muscular Dystrophy, and was a Director of the American Hospital Supply Corporation. For a number of years he was on the Advisory Committee for Education for the National Foundation. He received Merit Citations from Washington University in St. Louis, Northwestern University, Iowa Wesleyan College, and the University of North Carolina Medical School, and honorary degrees from several institutions including his alma mater, Northwestern University.

His interest in international medical education was demonstrated by his work with the China Medical Board of New York. He became a trustee in 1944 and its chairman in 1956, retiring in 1971. In the beginning this Board was concerned with the work of the Peking Union Medical Center in China. After 1949, it has devoted its resources to the advancement of health education in the Far East. He was a member of a number of scientific and medical associations, Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Xi, Alpha Omega Alpha, Nu Sigma Nu, and Phi Delta Theta. His clubs included the University Club of New York and the Century Association. He was a member of the St. Andrew's Society, the Pilgrims of the United States, the New Women's Society and the Kaaba Shrine Temple in Davenport, Iowa. He was an Elder of the Hitchcock Presbyterian Church in Scarsdale.

He is survived by his widow, Sarah Callen Hinsey of Scarsdale, New York, two children, Joseph Hinsey of Scarsdale and Elaine H. Reynolds of Hinsdale, Illinois, a brother and five grandchildren. A memorial service will be held at 2:00 P.M. on Saturday, March 28, at Hitchcock Presbyterian Church in Scarsdale. In lieu of flowers, contributions to the Church's Memorial Fund would be appreciated.